



World's Fair, 1940. Court of States across reflecting pool, toward replica of Philadelphia's Independence Hall. Gottscho-Schleisner Collection, Library of Congress

## Signs of the Times: 1933-1942

### 1933

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt's first inaugural speech: "We have nothing to fear but fear itself."
- FDR's first Fireside Chat.

### 1934

- Diego Rivera's Rockefeller Center mural, with portrait of Lenin, dismantled.
- Dionne quintuplets born in Ontario.
- Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) established to police securities industry.

### 1935

- Works Progress Administration (WPA) established.
- Hallie Flanagan named director of Federal Theatre Project (FTP).
- Radio shows, *Fibber McGee & Molly* and *Backstage Wife*, debut.
- Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* opens in New York City.
- League of Nations condemns Germany's rearmament policy under Adolf Hitler.
- Nazi government revokes German citizenship of Jews.
- Italy, under Mussolini, invades Ethiopia.

### 1936

- Orson Welles directs an all black cast in FTP funded production of *Macbeth*.
- Robert Frost's *A Further Range* wins a Pulitzer Prize.
- Margaret Mitchell publishes *Gone with the Wind*.
- Charlie Chaplin's film, *Modern Times*, released.
- Bing Crosby records, "Pennies from Heaven".
- Jessie Owens wins four gold medals in track and field at summer Olympics in Berlin, Germany.

### 1937

- First Social Security checks issued.
- Dedication of Appalachian Trail.
- FTP's most popular production, *Power*, premieres in New York City.
- Basque town of Guernica destroyed by German bombs.
- Crash of the Hindenburg.
- Japan invades China.

### 1938

- Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* opens on Broadway, wins Pulitzer Prize.
- Walt Disney's animated feature, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, released.
- Wages and Hours Act passed, banning child labor and establishing the 40 hour work week.
- Hurricane blows through Long Island and New England killing 680 people.
- Orson Welles causes panic with *War of the Worlds* radio broadcast.
- Irving Berlin releases "God Bless America" with Kate Smith singing it on Armistice Day.

### 1939

- World's Fair opens in Flushing Meadows, New York; introduces public to television.
- John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* published.
- John Lomax and wife Ruby finish recording the folk music of 300 rural artists.
- Germany invades Poland. Great Britain and France declare war on Germany.
- *Wizard of Oz* premieres, starring Judy Garland.
- Federal Theatre Project abolished.

### 1940

- Abbott & Costello debut on NBC Radio.
- Winston Churchill becomes Prime Minister of Great Britain.
- German troops enter Paris and attack Denmark and Norway.
- Alien Registration (Smith) Act requires registration and fingerprinting of over 5 million aliens.
- World's Fair closes.

### 1941

- Japan bombs Pearl Harbor.
- Germany invades the Soviet Union.
- The United States enters World War II.

### 1942

- Federal Art Projects end.